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Search the Scriptures.—John v. 29.

Speaking the Truth in love.—Eph. iv. 15.

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REV. MILTON BIRD, EDITOR.

LOUISVILLE, KY.

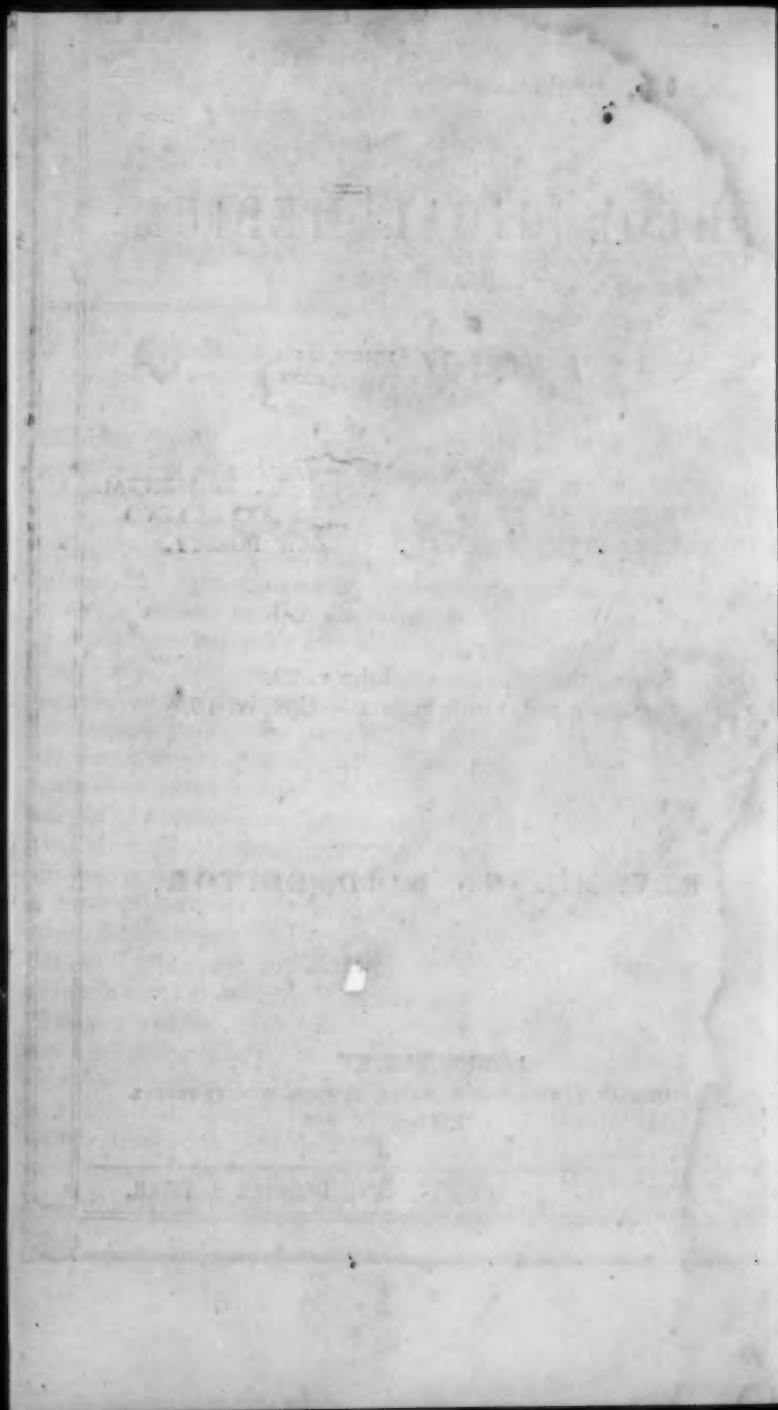
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No. 1.

"DID JESUS CHRIST SUFFER THE PENALTY  
OF THE LAW FOR HIS PEOPLE?"

Dr. Rice, of the 'Presbyterian of the West,' and Dr. Converse, of the 'Christian Observer,' have been discussing this question relative to the nature of the Atonement: the former affirms, and the latter denies.

We have read the discussion from the commencement, as far as it has progressed. Sometimes they are really at issue, and at others, manfully talking words at each other. It strikes us they begin in a mist and end in a fog.

They take for granted the Calvinistic view of Christ's special relation to the elect, constituted by the eternal covenant between Him and his Father. They both stand upon the *Calvinistic platform*, namely, the eternal and absolute decree of election, which secures every individual included in it against dying in sin, and secures to all the elect their justification and eternal life.

The point in debate is not whether Christ is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, or gave himself a ransom for all our race; but are the sufferings of Jesus Christ exactly equal to the guilt of the elect? or the same thing, in the language of the debaters: "*Did Jesus Christ suffer the penalty of the law for his people?*" They are agreed that the Atonement was made by Jesus Christ for certain elect persons. Dr. Rice holds it essential to this theory, that Christ should suffer the penalty of the moral law for them. Dr. Converse does not consider it essential that he should; and this is the point in controversy between them. It can be nothing more, nothing

less, and nothing else, unless Dr. Converse meant to argue that the Atonement is more extensive than the decree of election. If this were the case, the controversy would not be very unlike the Lilliputian war. As the history goes, it was the custom, in eating eggs, to begin at the little end, till on a certain occasion the king's son cut his fingers. He then proclaimed a law, that ever afterwards, in eating eggs, that they should begin at the big end. Those in favor of beginning at the little end, declared it was an innovation, contending that it had been the custom from time immemorial to begin at the little end; and for this intolerable innovation, they waged an exterminating war against the party beginning at the other end.

But Dr. Converse and Dr. Rice both restrict the provision of the Atonement to certain *elect* individuals. This is the doctrine of the Confession of Faith which both profess to adopt.

Mr. Converse, in his second number, says: "Jesus, then, bore the sins of his people—as their *atonement sacrifice*." "The atonement is the satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of man, made by the sufferings and death of Christ." Dr. Rice expresses his gratification, to find that this definition of the atonement, by Dr. Converse, fully confirms the doctrine for which he is contending. And this doctrine Dr. R. states as follows: "Jesus Christ, as the legal substitute of his people, endured the penalty of the law for them.—"Our Saviour endured for his people *the penalty of the law*."—"He was placed under the law, the whole law, not for himself, but for his people. He was placed under the law, that he might meet the whole of its claims against them, especially its *penal* claims, and thus redeem them from the penalty."—"That he endured the legal penalty due the sins of his people."—"Christ suffered the penalty of the law for his people."—"That the sins of his people were imputed to him, so that he endured the penalty due to them."—"That God laid on Jesus the sins of his people."—"That our Saviour PURCHASED OR REDEEMED HIS PEOPLE."—"Jesus Christ having placed himself, as media-

tor, under the law, did perfectly obey it for his people, and satisfy its claims against them; and this obedience and satisfaction God imputes to them—that is, he sets it to their account, and treats them as if they had perfectly obeyed the law, and satisfied all its claims.”—“Now observe, his people owed a debt. A debt is a legal obligation. What debt did they owe? They were under the law, and they transgressed. The debt thus contracted was the obligation to suffer the penalty of the law. Jesus Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt—did suffer the penalty of the law. When the debt is paid, the law has no further demand against the debtor.” “Jesus Christ *did bear the sins of his people.*” “That the Lord *laid upon Jesus Christ the iniquity of his people.*” In this, and like oft repeated phrase, Dr. Rice states the Calvinistic theory of an atonement to save the elect.

Dr. Converse states the sense in which he uses the term. “The word atonement is sometimes used in the sense of reconciliation, which is one of the *effects* of the atonement. Our Confession, pp. 49 and 60, affirms the obedience and death of Christ to be ‘*a full satisfaction*’ for the sins of believers.”—“The offering of Christ once made is *a full and perfect satisfaction to Divine justice* for the sins of men.”—“The sufferings of Christ were *vicarious*, and *for the sins of men.*” “He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.” Dr. C. understands this and other parallel texts to “affirm that the death of Christ was a *sacrifice*—a sacrifice for the sins of men—that it was *propitiatory*; that it has redeeming efficacy—it constitutes the ground, and the only ground, on which God is pleased to bestow pardon and eternal life on believing sinners.”—“Jesus, then, bore the sins of his people—as their *atoning sacrifice*—‘as a lamb led to the slaughter’—not as a criminal enduring *punishment*”—“We have no novelties and *no new doctrines* to offer on this subject. We take the *great fact* of the atonement—‘*a propitiation for the sins of the whole world,*’ and we hold it up, just as it is presented in the clear light of the bi-

ble, that our brother may see, that in his theory, he adds to the doctrine, and *modifies* it, and makes justification a matter of *law*, and atonement a *matter of penalty and barter*, in order to sustain the main position in his mistaken theory." Here I will remark, that Dr. C. as well as Dr. R. subscribes the Confession of Faith theory of an atonement for the elect alone; therefore he cannot, any more than Dr. R. "take the great fact of the atonement—a *propitiation for the sins of the whole world*," without doing violence to their creed. But we proceed.

Dr. Converse, speaking of Dr. Rice's idea of exhausting the penalty of everlasting punishment, says: "This supposition is based upon a *commercial* view of the subject, which appears to degrade the great doctrine of the atonement, and dishonor its glorious Author. It makes God the exactor of *so much blood*, according to the rigid demands of law, for a *certain amount of pardons*. The *blood and sufferings*, in this contract, must be *equal in the aggregate* of the penalties due to all the redeemed! 'Those whom he would save' [here Dr. C. quotes Dr. R's language,] 'were criminals in the hands of justice—shut up in prison; and he paid for them the price which justice demanded. And what did the just law of God demand, when it said, 'pay me that thou owest!' The broken law has but one claim, viz.: that its penalty be inflicted." Says Dr. C.: "all this *possibly* might have been so, if salvation were of the *law—by works and penalties*—but it is of grace; then, surely, there is no occasion for the commercial transaction which Dr. R. has described; and we must call upon him to *prove* that salvation is obtained by this kind of barter, before we receive the opinion as the orthodox christian faith." But the merits of the controversy between the Doctors, if it has any, will perhaps be better understood by our readers, from the heads of leading arguments on both sides. I therefore state them in brief.

Dr. Rice labors to prove that '*Christ endured the penalty of the law for his people*,' by the following arguments:  
1. That this was *necessary* to deliver his people from the

penalty. 2. That Christ was made under the law as they were under it. 3. That he bore their sins. 4. From their justification. 5. That *the sins of his people WERE IMPUTED to Christ, so that he endured the penalty due them.* 6. The scriptures teach that our Saviour purchased or redeemed his people. 7. If it be not true, that Christ bore the penalty of the law, his death does not answer the purpose of an atonement. 8. Those who deny that our Saviour endured the penalty of the law, are obliged, in order to preserve something like an atonement, to invent a new kind of justice.

In reply to these positions, Dr. Converse maintains that the first is a mere *assumption*; that the assertion that the penalty must be inflicted in order to constitute the sufferings of Christ a full atonement for the sins of men, is not sustained by the scriptures. To the second he replies, that the fact that Christ was subject to the moral law, is no proof that he bore its *penalty*, for he became subject to it in taking our nature; third, that to bear sin means to *suffer* for it, and not necessarily to endure *the penalty* of the law; fourth, that the law makes no provision whatever for the justification of the sinner, which is not a work of *law*, or *penalty* in any sense, but a *glorious act of grace*; 5th, we cordially receive the doctrine of imputation, as taught in the scriptures: but it furnishes no valid support of Dr. Rice's argument. Jesus suffered, not as a *criminal* bearing the punishment inflicted by a sentence of law; but as a sacrifice—the sacrifice of his soul; punishment is not propitiatory, it does not make amends for sins; 6th, Dr. R. has not proved that salvation is not obtained by the kind of barter taught in his theory; it is of grace—not by works and penalties, not a certain amount of blood for a certain amount of pardons; 7th, Dr. Rice brings no inspired writer to sustain him in his affirmation: when and where has God said that the sacrifice of his Son exhausted the penalty of his righteous law—that that sacrifice was the penalty itself, multiplied by millions, to equal the numbers of the redeemed, and all condensed in the death of the Cross? 8. "Our friend's

eight argument has taken us again by surprise. Instead of bringing it from the scriptures, he" merely "lays down his proposition : his theory makes justification a matter of law, and atonement a matter of penalty and barter. Mistaken theory. The scriptures do not teach that the law provides for punishing a substitute in place of the criminal, or that the justification of a sinner is a matter of law."

Dr. Rice thinks he has been met by positive assertions; and Dr. Converse is of opinion that Dr. R's arguments are but positive assertions : so it appears that each places a similar estimate on the other's arguments; and in this respect, at least, they are agreed.

Dr. R. asserts, "the penalty of the moral law is SUFFERING DEATH, but not necessarily a guilty conscience. The essential penalty of the law Jesus Christ endured."

Dr. C. calls upon him to *prove by scripture*, "that the lashings of conscience (remorse,) are not an essential part of the penalty of the law."

Dr. Rice says: "He asks us to prove that the lashings of conscience are not an essential part of the penalty of the law. Let him prove, if he can, that they are a part of it. He has no right to assume that they are, and call on us to prove a negative. If he can prove that they are an essential part of the penalty, he will have gained his point. Let him try."

Dr. R. states: "We do not contend, that the sufferings of our Saviour were the same in degree, or in duration, which his people, if lost, would endure. They must have suffered forever, for two reasons, viz.: 1. They are finite, and 2, if lost, would continue to sin forever." Again, he says: "When we affirm that our Saviour endured for his people, *the penalty of the law*, we do not mean, either that his sufferings were precisely the same *in kind*, that they, if lost, would have endured; or that they were the same in *degree* and *duration*." Then it may be asked what is the real difference between the Doctors?

Dr. C. thinks he "might have argued" that Dr. R. "does not believe the theory, which he labors to support. If

we understand him, he does not, after all, believe that 'Christ endured the penalty of the law.'"

"In these statements, he maintains that the sufferings of Christ were not the same as the legal penalty, *in kind*, nor *in degree*, nor *in duration*. Can he then persuade his readers that he really holds the doctrine that Christ suffered the penalty of the law?"

The Doctors have sprung a question not found in the Record; and we suppose they will have to settle it, as best they can, without the *word* and the *testimony*.

Dr. Rice sometimes attempts to frighten his Calvinistic readers by the old bugbear howl of heresy from searching after truth and from entertaining any suspicions that distinctive Calvinism may be a fallible thing. And Doctor Converse rather retorts on him that he is not altogether orthodox in his constructions of Calvinism. Each quotes Calvinistic authorities against the other; and tells the other that he makes his authorities mean what they have not taught. It is a pity that Divinity Doctors, each claiming to be genuine Calvinists and champions of Calvinism, so perplex themselves and run into wild extremes in their hurried pursuit of a favorite hypothesis.

The Doctors both subscribe the same Confession of Faith, which is essentially Calvinistic, and teaches that the sufferings of Christ are exactly equal to the sins of the elect. Why should there be any controversy between them? Does Dr. R. suspect Dr. C. of teaching that Christ made an atonement for the unelected? Dr. C. could not do this without travelling beyond the limits of his creed. And if he intended to discuss the doctrine of a general atonement, why did he not do it, and do it in a plain, scriptural, matter of fact style? If we understand Dr. C., he holds the unconditional and eternal election of certain individuals to eternal life, an atonement intentionally for them, and their sovereign regeneration or effectual calling, as firmly as Dr. R. He may not see how he can preach the gospel to every creature, unless he teaches that Christ suffered in some sense for the whole race of man. While Dr. R. thinks that he can found

the offer of salvation to the *unelected* on the "infinite dignity" of the Saviour's character, aside from any atonement made for them. And this is perhaps the real difference between the Doctors, so far as it amounts to difference.

From the cautious collocation of his words, it is plain that Dr. Rice is disposed to stick to the old fashioned construction of the Presbyterian Confession. Dr. Converse may be more disposed to modify by construction. We take this to be Dr. R's position, that God inflicted upon his Son no more punishment than the sins of the elect deserved, and that it would have been unjust for him to have suffered for the sins of the unelected.

Dr. C. thinks he can interpret Calvinism for himself, and is inclined to reject this hypothesis, and still hold the doctrine to support which Dr. R. maintains his hypothesis.

The Doctors agree that no sinner is saved on the ground of his own obedience to the law; but the ground that the claims of the law have been satisfied.

Dr. Rice insists that the law can be satisfied only by suffering which exhausts its penalty. The law has a claim against THE ELECT, PEOPLE OF GOD, OR CHURCH, for a certain amount of suffering; Christ endures exactly that amount of suffering, and so extinguishes the penalty of the law, satisfied or paid the debt of HIS PEOPLE. Just as if a man owed one hundred dollars, he might make full legal payment with two thousand half dime pieces, or one thousand dime pieces, or four hundred twenty five cent pieces, or two hundred fifty cent pieces, or one hundred dollars, or with ten pieces of gold, of the value of ten dollars each. He thinks "the words redeem, ransom purchased," &c. set forth this doctrine.

Dr. Converse objects to this, and calls it a commercial view of the subject, dishonoring to God. "It makes God the exactor of SO MUCH BLOOD, according to the rigid demands of law, for a CERTAIN AMOUNT OF PARDONS." He contends that this destroys the doctrine of salvation by grace. And maintains that Christ satisfied divine justice with-

out suffering the penalty of the law. Dr. C. says, "Jesus bore the sins of his people—as their atoning sacrifice."—"The atonement is the satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of man, made by the sufferings and death of Christ, a full and perfect satisfaction." Dr. R. appears to think the more suffering the more grace; and Dr. C. the less suffering the more grace. In the view of the other, each sweeps away the atonement altogether.

It is plain that the Doctors feel the fact which has been felt for a long time, that distinctive Calvinism on the one hand and distinctive Arminianism on the other, had gone too far, and that the truth was to be found in a middle position, rather than with either of those leading extremes. The debate, between Dr. R. and Dr. C. that commenced in consequence of this feeling, is not a controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism, it is Calvinism itself that is the arena on which the question is debated and is to be decided, and the parties concerned are a rigid Calvinist on the one hand, and one of his own faith on the other. The question they are controverting has its foundation in their Calvinism, not the scriptural doctrine of atonement.

Dr. Rice charges Dr. Converse with inventing "A NEW KIND OF JUSTICE." And from this it seems that Dr. R's OLD KIND OF JUSTICE can in no way be satisfied without the last farthing, or the last pound of flesh from the heart. Is this justice in its principle, benevolence and holiness? Does it relate to the administration of God's government and the universal rectitude of his nature? Is it legislative or judicial justice? Though the claims of divine justice are expressed in the moral law, yet its penalty does not admit of being gauged, and measured, and weighed by the human intellect, not to say imagination. Mr. Rice has failed in his attempt to do it. He says: "The penalty of the moral law is *suffering*; and our Saviour suffered for his people—bore the Cross—the penalty—for them." That is, he suffered the penalty of the law for the vessels of mercy, not the vessels of wrath. But the latter are just as much under the moral law as

the former. There is just as much penalty in the case of the unelected, as the elected individuals. But he only suffered for these; not for the unelected; he did not bear the Cross—the penalty for them. Then did he suffer the penalty of the law for a part of our race and not for others?

Transgressors of the moral law, suffer the lashings of conscience. Either it is an essential part of the penalty, or it is not. If it is not; then God inflicts on them illegal and unjust suffering. For infliction beyond the measure of guilt, is not punishment, but cruelty, of which God is incapable. But God is just and the claims of justice are expressed in the moral law. If so, the transgressor suffers no more than the penalty of the law. God will inflict on him no more punishment than his guilt deserves; as soon would he withhold from the righteous a part of their reward, as do this. Consequently the lashings of conscience are an essential part of the penalty of the law. Now since Dr. R. admits that Christ did not endure remorse, that his sufferings were not the same either in kind, or duration, that his people if lost would have endured; he may therefore as well yield the point at once respecting his mode of ascertaining the amount of Christ's suffering. For when he concedes that Christ had no consciousness of personal guilt, did not suffer the lashings of conscience, the pangs of remorse—did not endure the same suffering either in kind or duration; how can he, in the face of this concession, argue that Christ endured exactly the same amount of suffering, the same literal penalty of the law, as would have been endured by the "Church," "his people," if he had not endured it for them? To argue thus involves a plain contradiction. Either they would have suffered more than the penalty of the law, which would have been unjust suffering, or Christ did not extinguish that penalty by suffering exactly the amount, the very penalty they must have suffered, if he had not suffered it for them. How does Dr. R. endeavour to avoid this conclusion? He says that the lashings of conscience, the pangs of remorse, are not an essential part of the penalty of the law; and this lands him in

universalism, much as he contends against it; remove from the transgressor the lash and sting of conscious guilt, and what punishment remains for him to endure that is not endured by the innocent? If the disobedient suffer only what the obedient suffer; is this far from universalism, if it is not the very thing itself? If it be said that they suffer what is not essential to the penalty; this would go to say that God takes pleasure in suffering; for he certainly would not inflict unnecessary punishment, if he did not delight in it. And if he delights in it, it seems that he is rather malevolent than benevolent. But when he could swear by no greater, he swears by himself, saying, "as I live saith the Lord God I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Then he does not inflict unnecessary punishment. The wicked suffer the lashings of conscience: therefore the stings of guilt, the pangs of remorse, are an essential part of the penalty of the law. And Dr. R. being judge, he fails to maintain his hypothesis. He errs in assuming an analogy between the atonement and the operations of commerce, human law and punishment which does not exist. The greatest and most sublime moral transaction of the universe is not to be judged of by any pecuniary operation or administration of human law.

The meaning of Dr. Rice cannot be mistaken. the amount is this: Jesus Christ has suffered enough to save the elect; but not enough to save any one else. This he has not, and no other Calvinist yet has proved this doctrine, from the Record; and of consequence no one is bound to adopt it as an article of his creed. Now since Dr. C. and Dr. R. agree that Christ suffered enough to save the elect; why should they have a controversy about the mode of measuring the amount of his sufferings? It is an old sophism to liken the atonement to a transaction of dollars and cents in a way to abuse scriptural metaphors, and so make it a stipulated amount of suffering for certain individuals, and to contend that if Jesus Christ had suffered for the sins of all men, he would have suffered more than was due to the sins of the elect, and that God would have been unjust and Christ oppressed by such an

amount of suffering. What else could they mean? Dr. Converse, so far as I can discover, draws no exact line of distinction between himself and Dr. Rice; he does not argue that Christ made an atonement for the sins of all men. Are they not agreed that the atonement was made by Christ for "his people," "the church," "the elect," not the sins of all men? Are they not agreed in their view of unconditional personal election and effectual calling? In short, in all the distinctive principles of Calvinism, they do not differ. They are remarkably cautious in the collocation of their words, perhaps by the phrase; "his people," "the church," and others of like import, they may mean that these were exclusively the people, the church for whom Jesus suffered and shed his blood; or in other words, whom his atonement is capable of saving. And here they are guilty of a sophism; for this is precisely begging the question, that the atonement of Jesus was made for a part of our lost race, which I deny and call for the proof.

These metaphysical divines, true to their Calvinistic system, subscribe every thing essentially belonging to it. They speak of Christ dying for "his people," the INDIVIDUALS whom the Father had given him, to be by him redeemed, effectually called, justified, sanctified and glorified. Thus while he makes an atonement for them, others not elected are passed by. Such is the manner in which Calvinism exhibits the atonement; but nothing can be more unlike the Bible representation of it. The Saviour's own favorite and oft repeated emblem of himself was, 'the good shepherd leaving the ninety and nine sheep in the wilderness, and going in quest of the one that was lost.' He does not pass by any—does not leave even a single one: but is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Salvation is necessarily connected with repentance, as an indispensable condition, not implying by any means, that repentance is the procuring cause of salvation; this lies alone in the atonement; and is instrumentally received by repentance towards God and faith in our

Lord Jesus Christ. Socinians, who reject the doctrine of satisfaction, and those of the Romish church who advocate good works as the procuring cause of salvation, are alike opposed to the doctrine of holy scripture.

The Doctors cannot escape from the fog which envelops them until they come to the doctrine of general atonement, and content themselves with the plain fact as stated in the Bible. That when the human race became guilty and corrupt, means of pardon, consistent with righteous government, were introduced by the atonement for sin, made by the death of Jesus Christ, received by faith; and that supernatural aid was put within their reach, by which their guilt could be removed, the evil of their nature cured and the disposition to obey the will of God imparted.

The ground and motive of the forgiveness of sin on the part of God is his unmerited goodness and benevolence. This is the plain and uniform representation of the holy scriptures. John, 3: 16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." God hath appointed Christ to be an atoning sacrifice, or propitiator through faith in his blood. It is God's purpose to save sinners, on account of their faith in Jesus Christ, without their own desert. He feels a paternal interest in all men, and is willing to save all, since all, as sinners, need salvation; but men can never obtain a title to salvation by their own imperfect obedience to the law, but only by faith in Christ, to whom they are indebted for this blessing, and in a way exclusive of all personal desert. All are sinners unworthy of divine favor, and deserving of punishment. But God, in the exercise of his impartial and paternal love, desires to make all men happy, and accordingly intends the obedience, suffering, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession of Christ to be the means of the happiness of all. The meaning of the proposition, then, is this: The death of Christ was the means of delivering and rescuing our race from the greatest misery, from the punishment of sin; or of effect-

ing our eternal liberation from misery and punishment according to Hebrews, 9: 12. Is. 43: 3, 4.

Dr. Rice and Dr. Converse are discussing the question *how and by what means* Christ procured for us pardon from God, or the forgiveness of sins. They are trying to push their inquiries beyond what is written in the law and testimony of God; and in so doing, obscure rather than simplify the question at issue between them. Better in our judgment, be content with what God hath said upon the subject. Travelling beyond the Record only darkens counsel by words without knowledge.

The Bible declares, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Is. 53: 4, 5, 6. That he, who knew no sin, was made a sin-offering; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. 2 Cor. 5: 21. That Christ "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit." 1 Pet. 3: 18. That "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. 10: 4. The death of Christ atoned for all sins. So it is written. 1 John 1: 7. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from *all* sin." Whosoever believeth in him, is free from the whole punishment of sin.

The inspired writers neither stated, nor decided the question which Dr. R. and Dr. C. have been so earnestly discussing. It is plain that they have been led into it by the distinctive decree of their system, which positively fixes and determines with mathematical precision the individuals and the number to be saved, and also the amount of suffering necessary to save them; which makes the death of Christ a sacrifice to power, not law and justice. The Doctors can never prove their ism on the point

in dispute; they may assert and contradict each other till the resurrection trumpet sounds, or settle it as and when they please. What does it signify? It leaves the unelected, a part of the human race, under an immutable fate, drawn upon them by the sin of Adam; and, besides this, a fatal incapacity to obey God, and an eternal unconditional decree of reprobation. I then ask, what kind of concern have they in Dr. R's affirmative or Dr. C's negative, or both? Their destiny was settled by a sovereign act of God's will. The question affirmed and denied relates solely to the elected, not the unelected or reprobated. The decree of election is carried into effect by the same agency from which it emanated, and the elect are saved, not merely because they were elected, but for the same reason for which they were elected.

In like manner the unelected are damned, not only because they were not elected, but for the same reason for which they were not elected, namely, the will of God. It strikes me it would puzzle the Doctors to form any notion of the purposes he has in view in showing them temporal favors. His dealings with them cannot be corrective; they have no trial or probation. There is nothing intended for them in mercy; there is nothing designed ultimately for their amendment; they have no interest in reformers or reformations. No evasion or subterfuge can be so futile, puerile and barefaced, as the pretence that God's design to save a part of the human race, lays no bar in the way of the rest. There never was a greater, a more shameful, or ridiculous absurdity, than to say to a sinner, for whom Christ did not die: "If you do not believe in Christ you cannot be saved." Or to say, "Christ died in a certain sense for every man; the atonement is infinitely sufficient to save the whole world." By this narrow and shallow kind of sophistry, a fog is raised and diffused over the whole surface of distinctive Calvinism, which remains the very same, whatever tricks its defenders play with language. The cardinal point for the Doctors to meet, is a fact or the non-existence of that fact; it is stated in a simple proposition: The Son of God made an atonement for the whole human race. The Calvinist

either affirms or denies the predicate of the proposition. The subject should be examined in this light, to discover the true nature of the atonement. It presents a far nobler outline of the plan of redemption than can arise from any view of a limited atonement.

The atonement is a general provision to meet a universal necessity of man. The benevolence of God is not confined to a small portion, but embraces the whole family of man. Rom. 3: 29. As the moral disease is universal among men, the remedy must needs be universal, ver. 9, 22.

It is the clear testimony of the scriptures that Christ endured death for the whole human race. 2d Cor. 5: 14, 15. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." "God reconciled the world to himself through Christ," ver. 19. "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2: 6. "He is the propitiator, not only for our sins, (those of christians,) but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2: 2. In his epistle to the Romans, Paul controverts the mistaken opinion of the Jews, that the blessings of Messiah's kingdom belong exclusively to the posterity of Abraham. Romans, 5: 12, 19, he shows that as the first Adam was the author of sin in the world, and of the consequent punishment which all men now endure, so the second Adam is the author of salvation and forgiveness for all. God desires to save the world, rather than condemn mankind forever, he sent his Son to pour out his soul unto death for the world. "And now that iniquity is put an end to; now that an everlasting righteousness is brought in; now that every attribute of his nature has been magnified by the great sacrifice; now that the weight of that heavy burden has been done away; now that there is nothing to intercept the flow of friendship from God to man—does it come down free as the light of day, and rich as the exuberance of heaven, upon a despairing world."

EDITOR.

## PAPISM DESTROYS, BUT PROTESTANTISM MAINTAINS INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Papism requires man to deliver up the keys of his understanding and conscience to the keeping of its ghostly priesthood. And he that dares to refuse doing it, exposes himself to pains and penalties and the endless torments of hell. Papists are therefore led to regard the bible, except when its meaning is dealt out to them in precious morsels by their priests, as a sealed book, and only fit to be used by the priests. This destroys all sense of individual accountability: consequently ruins and grinds down the people. It produced the night and slumber of the dark ages; and it has been the ruin and downfall of all free governments. When mankind surrender their understandings and consciences, without examination, to a set of men, they never more deserve to be entrusted with understandings, since they refuse to use them in the grandest of all concerns for which an understanding is given, or can be of use. Their relation to their Jesuitical guides is not that of rational and free men, but like the relation of the horse to the booted and spurred rider. Comparatively ignorant, they may be well pleased with their condition, sleek and easy as beasts of burden, as the horses that drag their carriage, walking or trotting under the driver's lash.

It is a first principle of Protestantism that man is accountable only to God for his religious opinions—that to exercise his individual reason and conscience is his inalienable right—that he must hold the keys of his own conscience in his own hand. This is no less essential to religious, than to civil liberty. It is utterly destructive of the doctrine of papal authority and priestly prerogative over all the rights of individual reason and conscience. The war between these two distinctive principles is one of extermination. There can be no compromise. Truth and right must prevail over error and wrong. Personality and individual responsibility are inseparable.

No man may surrender up his right of individual judgment and conscience. No body of people can make themselves passive things at the discretion of their rulers, whether ecclesiastical or political, without being crushed into the dust, degraded and injured in their physical, intellectual, civil and religious character.

It is destructive of the liberty and happiness of any great body of people, for any single hand to hold and exercise a power over them, which each individual of that body has no right to exercise over himself.

It is a remarkable fact, that individual accountability, a most striking characteristic of the Christian dispensation, and not less so of every free government, is also a characteristic of the Protestant religion. Man must be free to think and act in the great concerns for which he is endowed with the power of thought and action. Deprive him of liberty to exercise his own reason and conscience, and you take all liberty from him; he ceases to be a rational accountable man, and becomes a mere thing, a machine moved and controlled by a power foreign to himself.

He that would stand between individual conscience and the Bible assumes the prerogative of God. That book speaks its own meaning: when fairly translated it is its own interpreter. And it is the duty of each individual to enquire into the import of the Scriptures for himself.

The doctrines and moral maxims of vital importance to human happiness, the great body of practical wisdom, and, indeed, all the great truths essential to salvation, are made perfectly plain in the Bible. Why then is it necessary to have religious teachers and guides? Not to exercise an absolute control over man's reason and conscience; but to bring that reason and conscience to act upon the scriptures. That which never engages the attention cannot be known, however plain it is made. Nothing can sufficiently engage the attention which is not made a subject of thought, reflection, conversation and discussion.

The ministers of religion should know much and accu-

rately about the theology of the Bible; they should possess great knowledge; not that they may hold the key of knowledge, keep the people in comparative ignorance and be dictators of their faith; but that they may communicate that knowledge, and take measures that their people may also excel in knowledge, and be able to take up that invaluable book, the Bible, and adopt the only true and vigorous methods of understanding it, for it is the people's book, and supreme guide in faith and conduct.

EDITOR.

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### SAVING FAITH.

Saving faith opens the gates of life and glory to the sinner. For it instrumentally leads to pardon, justification, regeneration, and sanctification. Christ says, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." And this he spake, no doubt, in allusion to the sinner's justification and acceptance with God through him. As the gate of a temple is not the temple itself: so faith, however important, rather leads to, than makes up the body of religion.

Faith is not, as Calvinists teach, the principle of salvation, or an effect of regeneration. Faith does not derive its justifying, or saving power, from certain mystical qualities, or nameless properties it contains in itself; not from any holy quality it derives from a holy heart; but from its object, the righteousness of Christ—I mean his work of atonement and redemption. Faith derives its saving efficacy beyond and above the qualities and character of the human mind. That efficacy does not take its rise in some phantom conjured up by the ghost of metaphysics, but in that which saving faith takes hold of in the christian scheme.

Some idea may be formed of faith by considering its opposite, unbelief; which is in general hatred and rejection of the truth. The great object of the gospel is to recover

the sinner from his ruined state—to make him holy and happy; and on the sinner's part, it is necessary for him to apprehend the plan of the gospel, or the faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, *that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*; to approve of it in his heart, to receive it, and acquiesce in it, by obedience. Of course, as far as the intellect is concerned, as far as faith is the mere assent to the evidence of facts, there is no more virtue in it than in any other assent of the understanding. But when the understanding believes in the record God has given of his Son, and the heart cordially receives that record, and joyfully confides in it, that faith becomes saving, because the sinner then receives "Christ, and rests upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered in the gospel." While the sinner so receives and rests upon Christ for justification and acceptance with God, his emotions of gratitude can be surpassed only by his indescribable and overflowing love and admiration of the infinite glory and loveliness of the triune God, manifested in all his ways, and by all means, before his creatures.

That which gives faith its moral value and excellence is the alone consideration that it works by love, and in that way becomes holiness or virtue. Love works no ill, it is the fulfilling of the law. Consequently the law is not made void through faith, but established. But love has no place in the heart before faith. Faith does not take its rise in regeneration, but leads to it. This great and necessary change to restore fallen man to holiness and happiness is called a second birth: a man must be born again, i. e. he must undergo an entire change of heart, from hatred to love. Hence saith the scripture, "he that loveth is born of God, and he that loveth *not*, knoweth not God, for God is love." "And," saith the same Apostle, "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Since faith works by love, he that loveth knows that he has faith, and has passed from death unto life; for as it is written, "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." "He that believeth on the Son hath ever-

lasting life." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." It is *not said* that, *whosoever is born of God believeth that Jesus is the Christ*. Thus plainly do the scriptures teach that faith precedes regeneration. As well say that the serpent bitten Israelite was cured before he looked on the brazen serpent, as to assert that the sinner is born again before he believes in Christ crucified. Noah was not in the ark before he entered the door of it. Passing through the door goes before being in the house. Grace must be received by the sinner before he can experience its regenerating power in his soul. By faith he receives the grace which changes his heart. This grace is not a naked act of Omnipotence, by which the faculties of the mind are annihilated and recreated; nor does it add any new faculties to the mind. Regeneration takes place in a manner perfectly consistent with the laws of mind. In regeneration there must be both *efficient* and *instrumental* cause: the former does not effect regeneration without the latter. Nor does the latter without the former.

Faith in Christ embraces the simplest conceptions of his character as the Messiah, and an experience of those affections which belong to his spirit, and a consecration of the will to the keeping of all his commendments. It may therefore be said to develope itself in the understanding, the affections, and the will together. It expresses on one side the facts in human redemption, (not the theories about it,) and on the other the disposition, which these facts, received by faith, develope in the soul.

Saving faith is based in the gospel doctrine of grace. And salvation is by faith, that it might be by grace. Faith, pardon, justification, regeneration or adoption, sanctification and glorification are linked into each other, as so many inseparable links of a chain.

In the order of truth and the nature of the case, faith is first. So the scriptures teach, as may be seen in the following and like declarations:—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "He that believeth not shall be damned." If the sinner is saved, it is by

faith; and therefore by grace, and God has all the glory. If damned, it is by unbelief, and therefore by man's own agency, and all the blame and guilt are laid at his own door. It cannot be otherwise; according to the Scriptures man's destiny is not formed irrespective of his agency.

EDITOR.

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### A TRUE BUT STARTLING THOUGHT!

He that has no conscientious regard for truth, has no pure and undefiled religion; is as destitute of virtue and piety, as a pagan or a follower of the false prophet. It is true that intolerant prejudice and blind bigotry are no part of genuine religion; it is equally true that disregard to the distinction between truth and error, constitutes no part of that religion.

Now that Christianity is popular, a fearful amount of infidelity has found its way into the church. Many professing christians are infidels in principle and practice. Great God, what a cleansing of the sanctuary must take place. It is to be feared that the church relation of many has no foundation in a conscientious regard for truth. They give their example, influence, and means to support doctrines which they do not hesitate to assert they do not believe. They sacrifice conscience to social ease and convenience, truth to error, as if it were an innocent matter thus to do, as if God did not hold them as strictly accountable for this, as any other impious and unrighteous conduct.

EDITOR.

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### "THE MIDDLE SYSTEM."

The middle system is made up of the best parts of Calvinism and Arminianism, rejecting the erroneous parts of each of these systems. If we deny the infallibility of one

of these systems, is it demanded of us to believe that the other is infallible? We beg to be excused. As soon could we believe the pope or papal system infallible. We think no one guided by reason, not blind impulse, can do it. Long has it been felt, that Calvinism on the one hand, and Arminianism on the other, had gone too far, and that truth was to be found in an intermediate position, rather than with either of these leading extremes. The true system is found between them. It is an old, and has become a universal maxim, that truth lies between extremes.

There is a tendency of the human mind to extremes; and unless reason firmly holds the balance, the mind will drive into extremes. The middle system is the most reasonable and scriptural, because nearest the whole truth. It gives to the church and the world the benefit both of the new light and the old light that has been struck out of the rock of truth, by the flint of experience, upon religious doctrines and duties. As error and prejudice give place to truth and reason, there is an evident tendency at either extreme to the intermediate system.

EDITOR.

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## NEW AND OLD SCHOOL PRESBYTERIANS.

Notwithstanding the ecclesiastical war which, in 1837, gave being to two Presbyterian General Assemblies, each claiming to be the true Presbyterian Church of America, it is a fact that the New School church and the Old School church profess to hold and teach the same Confession of Faith in its true and obvious sense, and differ very little from each other in name and general aspect. Doctrinally, as above, their Confession is the same; the *Old School* now preach and write in the same phraseology as the *New*; and now practice about the same leading measures as the New School; and each seems determined that the other shall not excel in professions of regard for the standard of Calvinistic orthodoxy. Then, why

should they remain twain? The distinctive difference is so little as to be no object worth contending for. If the New School seem to abandon old Calvinism, still they constructively hold to it. The Old School now do the same. Both preach that Christ died for all—that all are invited to come—may come, believe and live if they will; still they maintain that none *will* come, but such as are drawn by God's *discriminating* grace, and that the only reason why one comes and not another, is that this grace or affectual calling is given to one but sovereignly withheld from another; and so making God's will as fully and truly the efficient cause of damnation as of salvation.

Here the New and Old School systems, notwithstanding their issue, as like drops of the same fluid, mingle into one, and are essentially the same. The former may have a greater tendency to leave old Calvinism, but simply as it were at some point on a circle, and necessarily to come round to it again. The stand point of both schools is the centre of the circle, the leading principle of Calvinism, namely: all else but the elect, by an absolute and sovereign decree, must remain entirely destitute of *electing discriminating grace*: consequently must and will be as certainly damned, as though they (New and Old School) were to come square up to their system and preach that Christ did not die for the unelected. Indeed, I do not see how he can be said to have died for them, when his death does not even bring them under a dispensation of grace—when he had no wish, no intention to bestow on them saving grace. It strikes me that it is all the same as though they had been appointed from absolute eternity to unconditional wrath or punishment.

One might as well be on one horn of the dilemma as the other. I have not yet met with any one having a metaphysical knife sufficiently keen edged to split the hair of difference. Few persons have sufficient power of discrimination to divide the North East quarter of a half quarter of nothing.

A leading peculiarity of the Old School creed, is the

doctrine of absolute decrees, decrees which, without any regard to the accountability of man, but exclusively in virtue of God's sovereign will, have unalterably fixed, from all eternity, the individual destinies of the human race. This is also embodied in the New School creed, as above seen. They do not profess to have reformed or modified the Confession of Faith.

So far as I can see, it is no difference whether a general or limited atonement is preached, except in regard to consistency with the creed; for the conclusion is the same as already seen: if general, why then it is made *effectual*, and that too by absolute divine agency, purpose and intention, only as regards the individuals *elected*: if limited, then as a matter of course, the result is exactly the same; thousands of our unhappy race were created expressly to be miserable forever. This is no caricature, I believe; it is not intended as such, but is given as a fair and veritable statement of the distinctive Calvinism of New and Old School Presbyterians. Individuals may construe as they please; but the creed speaks for itself. The proper authorities have not altered its meaning by foot notes, nor otherwise. The interpretations of individuals are unauthorised. I speak in the love of the truth, and as to wise men: judge ye what I say. EDITOR.

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## THE LAW, AND REDEMPTION FROM ITS CURSE.

BY REV. JAMES GUTHRIE.

*Christ was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law; and hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.—Paul.*

Law is both the foundation and the rule of government. All governments were established and administered according to some law, which has its origin in either natural, assumed or delegated right or authority.

God has an undoubted, natural right—a right growing out of the nature of things—to govern man. And in the exercise of sovereign authority he has chosen and determined to govern him on moral principles. In this, therefore, his government of man differs from that of inanimate matter, and also of irrational creatures. Different grades of creatures—whether animate or inanimate—are governed by laws adapted to their respective natures, and the claims of law are measured by their several abilities to understand and obey legal demands. The subjects of moral government, therefore, though all under one and the same law, are not all required to render an equal amount of holy obedience to God, but only such as their original or native moral capacities, rightly exercised, could enable them to put forth. But none such are exempt from obligation of this description,—for all are, by the very nature of their relation to God, under the most imperative obligation to him; and all his *commands are holy, just and good*. The law has claims upon them all and condemns to death for every failure to render the full amount of obedience of which they are capable. Whosoever, therefore, shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of the whole violation of the law, and has incurred its whole penalty, and yet the law constantly claims his whole obedience—for all are under law, and whatsoever things the law saith it saith to them that are under the law. And as all have sinned in Adam, so all are under the curse of the law, and have come short of the glory of God: and but for the obedience of another, rendered in behalf of man, the full penalty of the law must have been inflicted upon all the fallen race of man—for they were all *without strength*. But, *in due time God sent his Son to redeem them that were under the curse of the law*. This mission of the Son of God, therefore, embraced all mankind—and all alike, and to the same extent, and in the same identical sense.

But it may not be unimportant to enquire what law it was that man was under, and also what legal penalty he incurred. First, then, it evidently was the pen-

alty of the same law that he was under, and violated, and not of another, which man incurred. Second, it is equally evident that it was the same law which man was under and violated, that Christ was *made under*, and obeyed—both in his life and death—in order to redeem man. Not only the definite article, *the*, so frequently used in the text, refering alike to man and to Christ—but the general tenure of holy writ, on this subject, seems clearly to convey this idea. Man is, all mankind, were under the curse of *the law*, not a, or some law; and Christ was *made under the law*, not a or some other law, to redeem them, not some of them only, that were under *the* (same) law. But what law was this, under which man was *created*, and Christ was *made*? Two opinions seem to be entertained by men in regard to the solution of this question. Some call it the Adamic law, and others, the moral law. Nor does it appear that these were thought to be only different names for the same general law, but, by these appellations, those who use them, really seem to intend to convey an idea of separate and distinct laws, widely differing, both in their nature and in their design. Those who speak of the Adamic law seem to restrict its bearing, and even its existence, to the probationary state of Adam in the garden of Eden, while those who suppose that man received his existence, in Adam, and also receives it personally under the moral law, extend its existence through all eternity, and its claims and demands to the whole moral universe, and to every order of intelligences *respectively*, according to the character and relations of each other.

Now if this latter be the true doctrine, then by what Christ has done for man, atonement is made alike for Adam and his race, and by accepting the same they may be personally redeemed from the curse of the law, and justified from all, both federal and personal sin. But if the former idea be correct, then no atonement was made, only for original sin; and the personal sins of mankind never can be pardoned through that atonement, and now they cannot be redeemed from the curse, for we are not

now thought to be under the Adamic law, but under the moral law, and if Christ was not made under the moral law, which we have transgressed, then has he made no atonement for the sins committed under it; and so, without another Redeemer we never can be saved—for *Christ dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him*, and according to this theory all the human race excepting the original transgressors of the so called Adamic law, must remain under personal condemnation forever, unless God will sovereignly pardon them without regard to the loud demands of injured justice, which it is certainly known he will never do.

Thus it appears that by too much anxiety to justify the race of man before they were born, which is equal in substance to eternal justification—modern divines would render both infant and adult justification utterly impossible, and leave them alike under the curse of the moral law, to suffer forever the punishment due to all their sins.

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### “SPEAK THOU THE THINGS WHICH BECOME SOUND DOCTRINE.”

A lukewarmness in regard to truth and error is sinful. It is as criminal as the rejection of truth, and holding of error. Either be cold or hot. They that are lukewarm, are spewed out by sound doctrine and swallowed up of error, just as certainly and fully as those who are cold to truth and hot for unsound doctrine. He that is not for the truth is against it. He that does not speak sound doctrine, drives away from it and scatters error abroad. The opposition between truth and error is as utterly irreconcilable as that between right and wrong, holiness and sin, light and darkness. As no man can serve two masters, even so, no man can hold both truth and error; if he hold to the one, he will reject the other; if he love the one he will despise the other. There is no fence between sound and unsound doctrine, on which any one

can sit. A theological trimmer finds no place to rest the sole of his foot. He that changes his principles as he changes geographical points, with change of time and circumstances, or that has not moral honesty and independence to avow his sentiments, is just as detestable and unworthy of confidence as a man without principles.

It is bad enough for a man to be a Calvinist in heart and an intermediate in lip, without being the latter in fact and form, and the former by a professed ecclesiastical allegiance. Or the contrary, to be a Cumberland Presbyterian in heart and a Calvinist in lip, without being the latter in form, and the former by professed church connection. Such a person is rather an object of pity than contempt. There is a species of evasion and shuffling which every candid man detests from the centre of his soul. Man is here on a probation for the acquisition of sound principle and the formation of upright character. Let no man deceive himself; God is not mocked. Nothing but truth can appear in his presence chamber. Error cannot endure a single glance of the "All seeing eye." He that loves false doctrine, must gather the bitter harvest. He that sows the wind must reap the whirlwind.

As it is the nature of truth to manifest itself, so it is the nature of error to hide itself, to put on a false dress, and almost transform itself into truth. The author of error, when it best suits his cause, transforms himself into an angel of light.

The tendencies of sound and false doctrine, differ as widely as the narrow and broad ways. The imperial command: "Search the scriptures," "prove all things, hold fast that which is good," is obligatory on every reasonable or accountable man. He that embraces unsound doctrine builds upon the sand; and when the rains descend and the flood comes, and the wind blows and beats upon his house, it falls, for it is not built upon the rock of truth. He that is wise will dig deep and build upon the rock. Error is a withering curse to him who cherishes it. It is the alone and highest interest of every man to know and speak the truth in love.

They who sacrifice truth for a piece of bread, social ease, caste and human honor, will most assuredly find it hell-hot bread, ease and honor. They who cannot bear reproach and exercise self-denial for the sake of truth, cannot be disciples of Christ. False to truth they are false to God—truth is one of his glorious attributes. He that can place a silver estimate on truth, would, Judas-like, sell the Master for thirty pieces of silver. He that can handle the word of God deceitfully, is red with the crimson guilt of high treason against Heaven's King. If there is no peace to the wicked, there is none to the man of unsound principles, for he is wicked in the sight of God. He that is carried about by every wind of error that blows, is as unstable as water, the merest weather cock, whirling to every point of the compass, as restless as the flying cloud, and as devoid of peace as the troubled sea when its waters cast up mire and dirt. He cannot contend with wind and tide as the strong and noble steamer, but like the floating cork and driftwood, is bore along just as the current drives its way. The man of principle is no sail vessel; he has an inward motive power, and works his way alike through sunshine and shade, with or against wind or tide. He is not the stream of a summer shower, but the spirit of truth within him is as a well of water springing up into everlasting life—an unfailing fountain.

Say not that we speak uncharitably. Charity does not shut its eyes—it does not level the distinction between truth and error. Charity rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth. He that is incapable of discriminating between sound and unsound doctrine, has no true conception of charity. Not a few have a very absurd notion of charity. If there is no truth, it is plain there can be no charity. If we know no difference between truth and error, then we are utterly ignorant of charity. Charity is not inimical to controversy, but conducts it in the love of truth. Charity does not forbid investigation, but contends earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

I can love and respect one who honestly differs with me. Who does not admire sincerity? Such as make gain of truth, only value it above error when it serves as a better means to accomplish some selfish purpose, are objects of extreme pity and utter detestation. Such as are any thing or nothing, this or that, cringing and bending to time and circumstances, to popular whims and vices, I may really pity, but cannot respect. Who could? The mercenary time-server is an object of universal execration.

“Who dares think one thing, and another tell,  
My soul abhors him as the gates of hell.”

Not so the honest upright man who speaks things which become sound doctrine he commands the respect and the confidence of the good and the bad. So it should be, and so it will be while Jehovah reigns, and truth is an attribute divine.

EDITOR.

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### “LET HIM WHO IS WITHOUT SIN CAST THE FIRST STONE.”

We are not to understand by this, that the Saviour approves sin; nothing can be more opposed to its meaning. It is the most pointed and cutting rebuke of censoriousness our lessons in the school of experience teach us, that they who are the most faulty are the loudest to condemn. Who make a loud, or bitter cry and wail over the sins of a neighbor? They who are blind to their own sins which are of a deeper dye—they who are blind to their own faults which cover themselves.

Who suffer their faces to redden with anger, their tongues to break loose, and their blood to boil? They who speak censoriously, haughtily and profanely denounce others less steeped in crime than themselves. Not the good, such labor to do right as nearly as they can. They look with compassion on the erring. They pity instead of denounce.

EDITOR.

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### THE MILLENNIUM.

*Bishop Hall's reflections upon the study of the prophecy respecting it.*—O blessed Saviour! what strange variety of conceits do I find concerning thy thousand years' reign! What riddles there are in that prophecy which no human tongue can read! Where to fix the beginning of that marvellous millenary, and where the end, and what manner of reign it shall be—whether temporal or spiritual, on earth or in heaven, undergoes as many constructions as there are pens that have undertaken it; and yet when all is done, I see thine apostle speaks only of the souls of the martyrs reigning so long with thee—Not of thy reigning so long on earth with these martyrs.—How busy are the tongues of men—how are their brains taken up with the interminable construction of this enigmatical truth, when in the meantime the care of thy spiritual reign in their hearts is neglected—O, my Saviour! while others weary themselves with the disquisition of thy personal reign here upon earth for 1000 years, let it be the whole bent and study of my soul to make sure of my personal reign with thee in heaven to all eternity.

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## EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY REV. MILTON BIRD.

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